

2.1 GENERAL INFORMATION

Sub-region: The Western Balkans

Year: 2006

Thematic Focus	Cooperation partner(s)
Civil Society for Accountable Governance	Albania: Diaconia Agapes, Vatra Serbia & Montenegro: Philanthropy, Hungarian Interchurch Aid/ Merhamet, Ecumenical Humanitarian Organisation Macedonia: Macedonian Centre for International Cooperation Kosovo: NCA operational
HIV and AIDS	Albania: Diaconia Agapes, Serbia & Montenegro: Ecumenical Humanitarian Organisation, Philanthropy Macedonia: Health Education and Research Association Kosovo: Kosovo Social Marketing Association
Water & Sanitation	Macedonia: Macedonian Centre for International Cooperation Croatia: Philanthropy Knin Kosovo: NCA operational
Gender based violence	Albania: Vatra Kosovo: Hope and Homes for Children
Conflict Resolution and Peace	Macedonia: Macedonian Centre for International Cooperation Kosovo: Kosovan Nansen Dialogue, NCA operational; NCA and partners / regional
Education	Albania: Vatra Serbia & Montenegro: Philanthropy, Ecumenical Humanitarian Organization, Hungarian Inter-church Aid / Merhamet Croatia: Philanthropy Knin Kosovo: Hope and Homes for Children, NCA operational
Other: Reconstruction and agriculture; activities related to sustainable return	Serbia: Philanthropy, Hungarian Inter-church Aid / Merhamet Croatia: Lutheran World Federation Kosovo: NCA operational; NCA operational in partnership with UNHCR

2.3 Which projects were completed during the year?

NCA Project ID	Norad Project Number	Other Backdonor Reference	Project Name
10468		NCA	NCA Representation – The Balkans
12161		NCA/2050046 (MFA)	Shelter for victims of trafficking
12162		NCA	The Red Line Centre for PLWHA – EHO, Serbia
12163		2050098 (MFA)	Psychosocial Palliative Care, Philanthropy -Serbia
12264		NCA	Organizational capacity building
12168		20550097 (MFA)	Agricultural Development Sandzak – HIA/Merhamet, Serbia
12169		2050100 (MFA)	Building Local Capacities for Economic Independence, Philanthropy, Serbia
12174		NCA	Capacity Building Decan Water Utility – NCA Balkans
12177		2050118 (MFA/ NCA)	Semi-independent Living for Victims of Trafficking – Hope and Homes, Kosovo
12178		2050121 (MFA/NCA-TV)	HIV and AIDS Prevention and Behaviour Change Campaign, KOSMA / KOPF, Kosovo
12179		2050296 (MFA)	Intra-and inter religious Dialogue and projects

12181		2040325 (MFA)	UNHCR Lead Agency Programme, Mitrovica, Kosovo – NCA Operational
12220		2050060(MFA)	Assisted return and regional economic development, Lika, Croatia - LWF
12222		2040113 (MFA)	Integrated support to returnees, Knin, Croatia - Philanthropy
12505		2050096 (MFA)	Roma Resource Centre – EHO, Serbia
12818		2060265 (MFA)	HIV and AIDS and STD education – Diaconia Agapes, Albania
12832		2060114	Counselling services PLWHA – HERA, Macedonia.
12835		2060068	Agricultural Development – LWF, Lika, Croatia
12850		NCA	Education programme for children without parental care – Philanthropy, Serbia
12933		NCA	Support to NCA Representation – development of Roma Regional Programme
12951		2050406	Roma Camp Management – NCA Operational
13495		NCA	Flood Serbia – Philanthropy/NCA/ACT

2.4 To what degree have the programmes been implemented as planned, and what results were achieved during the year?

It should be noted that as for The Balkans, the sub-region covers four countries and the UN protectorate Kosovo. Most of the funding comes from the Norwegian MFA with project periods running from allocation dates rarely covering the calendar year. For this reason it is difficult to report on exact achievements during the year of 2006. Information on results is accordingly in most cases given in general descriptions rather than in exact figures. However, in the reports to MFA, NCA Balkans endeavour to report as accurate as possible according to a format given by the Ministry. Moreover it should be noted that NCA together with its partners in the region is endeavouring to build capacity and improve on both planning and monitoring.

In the Strategy Plan 2005 - 2009 for the Balkans it is mentioned that the Representation should close down in the course of the 2005 to 2009, meaning that the permanent presence of NCA through its office in Pristina should no longer exist after 2009. NCA Balkans is therefore in a process of looking into the possibilities of phasing out, and the preliminary time set is some time during first half of 2009. The time for closure or for an alternative kind of presence, is not yet answered. NCA has started a partner assessment which will be finalized in 2007. NCA's strategic priorities in the Balkans: NCA and partners should work for Peace and Reconciliation with a consolidated approach, NCA and relevant partners should endeavour to strengthen the work in relation to education and rights for the Roma population (as the most marginalized group in the Balkans), and NCA should widen the focus on anti-trafficking in particular in Kosovo and Albania. In all these sectors, gender in general and the role of women in particular has been and needs to be even more focused.

Another important focus is and will be on organizational capacity building of partners. And mentioning capacity building, NCA has and will continue to play a role in building capacity in relation to the thematic areas that NCA has chosen globally, but also the cross-cutting approaches and themes like Rights-based Approach, a more clear focus on women in relation to the UN Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, on the concept of Do no Harm, and on how to develop plans and a better way of monitoring the implementation of projects. It is believed that NCA has an important role to play in a post-conflict, violent prone and diverse societies like the Balkans - when it comes to raising awareness on who have the rights and to whom belong the duties, what are the roles in relation to gender, on how to work in diverse societies with past and present conflicts following ethnic and religious lines.

Having particularized peace-building, the Roma, anti-trafficking and capacity-building of partners, it should be mentioned that NCA has played an important part in introducing and building capacity in relation to HIV and AIDS projects. However, as funds are being depleted or not allocated by MFA to

the same extent as before, and as the spread of the virus did not happen to the extent feared in the region, HIV and AIDS projects will gradually be phased out by NCA. However, it should be mentioned that the partners are already on their way to give responsibilities over to national authorities or to find alternative funding.

Civil society for accountable governance

For the NCA Balkans Programme, be it partner programmes or operational programmes, members of local communities have been empowered through awareness raising on their rights and duties. All programmes supported by NCA are implemented in close cooperation with national and municipal authorities in all countries.

Building partners' and NCA staff capacity when it comes to the understanding of the importance of women's role in society, and the need to work for gender equity is a slow process. It may be mentioned that the issue of gender based violence is considered to be sensitive to the degree that it is close to being a non-touchable issue. However, it is seen that both NCA Kosovo staff and partners in the region is slowly recognizing the need to deal with these issues in a committed way.

In **Albania** both partners work well in networking in the various fields of operation, thematically and geographically. One partner acts as resource partner to the government on developing laws to combat trafficking, cooperates closely with the police and participates actively in the local and national net-works. Another partner involved in HIV and AIDS awareness raising including the issue of stigma, work closely with local authorities and plays an active role in country coordination mechanisms.

In **Serbia** a programme aiming at empowerment of IDPs and domicile Roma in Novi Sad has provided legal counselling and training of Roma NGOs. Two HIV and AIDS projects aim at raising the awareness of state institutions for taking on responsibilities for People Living with HIV and AIDS (PLWA). A third organization is involved in rural community development to combat urbanism, one of the strategies being support to agricultural cooperatives. One partner in Serbia received funds for organizational capacity building with the aim of training staff in public relations and fund-raising, advocacy and lobbying and for improvement of internal policies and procedures.

In **Macedonia** NCA cooperates with a local partner representing one of the leading NGOs in building civil society in the country. One programme aims at building capacity and empowering faith communities in order to establish a self-governed inter-religious council. Another, a water programme, has a strategy of enabling local communities for water management according to Macedonian law.

In **Kosovo** NCA has given high priority to negotiations and cooperation with UNMIK and local authorities in order to implement a Roma return programme and a Roma camp management programme in Mitrovica. The Roma programmes focus on empowering not only the Roma community, men and women, but also at raising awareness and working for the rights of Roma in the local community. All return activities for IDPs and refugees, including a third programme implemented in close cooperation with UNHCR, are focused towards empowerment of individuals, local communities and local authorities – for protection, human rights and economic sustainable return.

HIV and AIDS

When planning, all projects are viewed as to the feasibility of HIV and AIDS activities to be included. For 2006 going into 2007, 4 projects were accepted for funding through MFA, one in each of the countries/province - except for Croatia. In addition NCA provided financial support, and one project received only NCA support. 3 of the partners are faith based organisations. Considerable efforts have been invested in networking with relevant authorities, public institutions and various NGOs.

In Albania awareness was raised among 1300 high school students (48 % F, 52 % M)- in general on HIV and AIDS related issues and on stigmatisation; 15 teachers (11 % F, 89 % M) and 65 health personnel received training (17 % F, 83 % M), 90 members of Orthodox youth groups (40 % F, 60 % M) received peer to peer training. Likewise HIV and AIDS awareness raising and training was included in a project against trafficking.

In Serbia achievements relate both to awareness raising, prevention and care. Related to HIV and AIDS awareness raising and care for PLWHA a telephone line, a web-site and e-mail have been in operation, run by both professionals and volunteers. Approximately 17.000 contacts were made. Psychosocial assistance and counselling were given either during visits to private homes, at the hospital in Belgrade or at consultation facilities of the partners. Seminars have been held for teachers of religious education and state funded institutions for children, in addition information has been disseminated through media.

The achievements in Macedonia relate to awareness raising, prevention and care and comprise distribution of information-material, face to face counselling and through internet, HIV testing, anti-retroviral therapy and palliative care for PLWHA, as well as distribution of condoms. In addition comes training and follow-up of people involved in counselling. NCA has suggested to the partner to seek possibilities to introduce HIV and AIDS related activities to faith communities; however, this has so far not materialized.

In Kosovo the project plan describes activities related to awareness raising and prevention and comprise ads on TV with a professional actor and with youth as target group, participation in radio programme, installation of condom vending machines in selected restaurants and cafes and follow-up of these, training seminars for students in schools and distribution of printed material to various target groups and on AIDS World Day. One project component is to approach religious communities in order for them to be engaged in HIV and AIDS activities. The project activities in 2006 were considerably delayed due to organizational changes for one partner. The activities started again towards the very end of the year 2006.

Water and sanitation

In Croatia NCA supports a programme for integration of returnees, which encompasses a water component. The achievements include distribution and installation of water pumps and bathroom items, delivering of water cisterns for collecting rain water and cleaning of wells. However, due to unforeseen causes, the project is somewhat delayed and it has been decided to apply for a short extension of the project period in order for all activities to be implemented. The water project in Macedonia was put on hold early autumn 2005 due to larger review.

Gender-based violence

Activities under the theme are in the Balkans mainly related to projects on human trafficking. However, there are initiatives taken in order to have a more specific focus on gender-based violence in other projects as well. Protection as part of interventions in communities of IDPs, refugees or Roma is a theme that was further developed in 2006.

The socio-economic situation with extremely high unemployment and poverty is seen as one of the main causes of trafficking in Albania. Around 270 women and girls were accommodated in the shelter for victims of trafficking in 2006. The women received medical/legal assistance, counselling, education and vocational training, in addition a number of the girls attended high school. Counselling was offered to women and their families, 230 girls joined their families and close to 90 families received counselling. During the year 4 girls were accommodated in rented flats outside the shelter as part of the plans for fully independent life. A major challenge, however, is to prevent women from being re-trafficked. The reasons are several. It is extremely difficult to bring traffickers to court and have them sentenced; for those who decide to denounce their traffickers, there is no witness protection neither for the victims and their families. The women/girls often have little education and no income and the money earned through prostitution is easy to come by. It is also seen that some of the women/girls lack motivation and effort to walk the hard way through rebuilding self-esteem, get education, fight for jobs and face both family and society after having been engaged in what is considered as shameful activities. Another factor that does not contribute to the situation is the cooperation with the police. Even though it could be assessed as fairly good, the personnel in the offices dealing with trafficking under the County Police and the border Police are new and inexperienced and as such not very effective.

NCA has encouraged the partner to widen the involvement among Roma communities when it comes to awareness raising and prevention. A component to this effect has accordingly been included in the programme proposal for 2007.

In Kosovo NCA supports a project for accommodation and care of up to seven young female adults who are victims of gender-based crime such as trafficking and have been abandoned by their families. In 2006 the number of young girls accommodated was 4 or 5 at any given time. Through a participatory method the youngsters are trained in taking on responsibilities for every-day life, receive vocational training or go to secondary schools. The girls are assisted in finding other accommodation and employment after they have left the flat. The allocation for this project going from 2006 into 2007 will be the last applied for to the Norwegian MFA, the idea being that NCA should shift the focus in Kosovo towards a wider involvement in awareness raising and prevention, possibly with a cross-boarder component involving a partner in Albania. It is assumed that in quite a few cases young girls and women are being trafficked into Kosovo from Albania.

Conflict resolution and peace

In Macedonia the objectives have been to improve cooperation between the religious communities, awareness raising on different religious practices together with improved availability of written information material. A participatory process between students (approximately equal number of females/males) and professors at the theological faculties and members of the religious communities in 2005 resulted in a new three year programme for 2006 - 2008. The programme includes exchange of lecturers and visits to the respective theological faculties, exchange visits to the 5 religious communities included in the programme, exposure visits to 'good examples' of inter-religious cooperation, preparation of written material, among other a common calendar for 2006. NCA is in discussion with the partner to see whether the Macedonia concept could be duplicated and included in a regional peace-building programme.

The inter-religious programme in Kosovo took place both on senior level and on local community level. The main achievement on senior level was an international conference in May for religious leaders in Kosovo, hosted by the Orthodox Church. The conference was considered to be of high value for the religious communities. A common statement issued acknowledged that all communities had suffered, condemned destruction of holy sites on all sides and mentioned concrete measures to be taken, among other to hold regular meetings, to convene a seminar for local religious leaders in Norway (postponed from 2005), to assist in the process for return of IDPs and refugees and to facilitate for communication between the religious communities. It was decided that the next conference should be held in the autumn of 2006 hosted by the Islamic Community. After the conference NCA immediately started to assist in the follow up of the action points, and the Islamic Community suggested dates for the next conference. However, it was not possible to go through with any concrete actions, as the Orthodox community met with obstacles in deciding on both participation and dates for the conference.

On a community level there have been busy activities with the aim of establishing contact between local religious leaders in selected communities in order to, in due course, to have activities implemented on the ground by the leaders. Continuous communication with priests and imams took place, and in some instances the local religious leaders met, both through facilitation of NCA and on their own initiative.

In October 2006 NCA conducted an internal assessment of the Kosovo dialogue programme – including plans for a regional peace-building programme. The conclusions of the assessment were to include other local individuals / institutions linked to religious communities, and as well expand into other geographical areas. In spite of previous initiatives having proved little results, the idea is to focus more on women and their role in the dialogue program. By expanding the target group, and not only focusing on religious leaders, other groups can be included in the program, among others the wives of the priests, imams etc.

The inter-ethnic dialogue programme has been implemented in cooperation with the Nansen Network through a national partner in Kosovo. In cooperation with NCA the partner has been involved in assisting in dialogue in the return communities in Mitrovica area and in the Roma IDP camps under NCA camp management. One diapraxis project, the so called "Multi-Ethnic Street", which was identified by a local community in 2005, was implemented by NCA in cooperation with the partner in 2006 through extra funds applied for from the Norwegian MFA.

A partner seminar in May 2006 discussed the idea of a partner owned regional peace-building programme with a focus on a concept for a community based 'settlement with the past' through the telling of the stories and with a focus on truth and forgiveness. A Task Force was established to follow up on action points. The Task Force later decided that one should have a study conducted

with the view to religious communities' role during and after wars and their potential for peace-building. The survey should serve as a basis for further planning and is planned for 2007.

With the view to conflict sensitivity, training on Do no Harm is planned for 2007.

Education

In Serbia a project for Romas have been implemented with activities comprising vocational training for 30 adults, pre-school and supplementary education lessons for 41 children (both men and women, boys and girls took part in all the activities). School material has been distributed, and parents have been engaged in parents' council. The outcome show improved enrolment in the regular school systems for Roma children. Another educational programme for children without parental care was implemented, focusing on supplementary education offered by volunteers. In addition IDP integration projects in Serbia include vocational training on wood carving, computer skills, sewing and weaving and reviving of vegetable growing skills.

In Kosovo, supplementary education facilitated through NCA Camp Management, started in the Roma temporary shelters in 2006.

Additional

In connection with IDP, return and reintegration projects, poor communities or among other vulnerable groups, there are project components that are not necessarily covered by the above mentioned thematic areas. These may be components related to construction, agricultural and health components, Roma camp management and various income generating activities.

Construction projects are in particular found in Kosovo. In the Roma Mahala program in addition to infrastructure NCA in 2006 constructed two apartment buildings for 24 Roma families in Roma Mahala in Mitrovica. The building of another two apartment blocks for 24 families started as well as the reconstruction of a medical clinic in the same neighbourhood.

Agricultural projects are found in Croatia and in Serbia. In Croatia, under the project finalized in 2006, material for 41 stables was distributed. In Serbia, in addition to vegetable growing projects, farmer families benefit from a project of sheep breeding (30 sheep distributed to 8 families) and alternative rye production.

Camp Management: In 2006 NCA had the responsibility for camp management for Roma IDPs initially in three camps in North Mitrovica, one of them being the new medical re-location camp for families coming from camps built on lead-contaminated ground; later in the year a fourth camp outside Mitrovica was added. As the lead-contaminated camps were emptied, the number of camps came down to two, with part of a third camp added as the families decided not to move. Principles for camp management are followed, including protection and human rights. The responsibilities include humanitarian aid and facilitation / coordination for social services, education etc.

2.5 Were there any special internal or external conditions that significantly affected the implementation of the plan for the year?

Throughout 2006 the negotiations on Kosovo status continued and like in 2005 one experiences that the parties are cautious to make commitments and are working strategically to secure positions. This situation together with the interethnic relations in general has made it extremely challenging to work with dialogue in Kosovo, in particular when it comes to religious dialogue. The planned seminar at the Nansen Academy Lillehammer for religious leaders from Kosovo was postponed from 2005 to 2006, and again to 2007 as the Orthodox leaders did not receive the necessary blessing from their Bishop in order to travel. Likewise there have been doubts as to whether the Roma would decide to move to Roma Mahala after the apartment blocks were finished. And the establishment of the new Roma re-location camp met with serious obstacles from the side of the local Serb authorities in North Mitrovica due to the tense political situation.

In 2005 NCA went through an extremely complicated period of negotiations and lobbying to obtain the necessary documentation and permits for the Roma Mahala reconstruction programme. These obstacles significantly delayed the implementation far into 2006.

An HIV and AIDS project in Kosovo was considerably delayed due to organizational changes for one partner. The activities started again towards the very end of the year 2006.

2.6 Results and risks: Is it probable that the projects/programmes will achieve their goals, or is there a risk of major changes?

Please be referred to 2.5 regarding the unsettled situation in Kosovo. There is a risk that especially the return and dialogue projects in Kosovo will be affected by the decision in the UN Security Council after the report on the status negotiations was presented to UN General Secretary in March 2007. Moreover the male dominated society and the patriarchal structures pose a risk in reaching the most vulnerable and the women in society. In particular this may have consequences when trying to create understanding and build capacity in relation to domestic violence in general and gender based violence in particular.

It should be noted that when it comes to the NCA operational programmes in Mitrovica a localization process is in progress. For this to be implemented, it is vital that there are both local NGOs and local authorities that are ready to and have the capacity gradually to take over responsibilities for the RAE Camp Management and the NCA/UNHCR Lead Agency Programme and for the sustainable return of Roma under the Roma Mahala return programme.

NCA is, together with partners, looking into the possibilities of developing a regional strategy and programme for a consolidated approach to peace-building with a 'dealing with the past' through focus on truth and forgiveness. The idea is to work with local communities and not a top-down approach. However, for the programme to be developed there is a need for the partners to be committed and to have civil courage to deal with issues of a sensitive character, not in the least with the view to working with faith communities and their role during and after wars.

2.7 Which concrete measures have been implemented to ensure administrative/technical and financial sustainability?

Most partners have financial support from other international partners, and endeavour to pull the respective authorities in as responsible partners both programme-wise but also when it comes to financial support. Three organisations were supported in 2005 with funding for organisational capacity building aiming at developing strategic plans and improving financial management system. A Balkan Civil Society Development Network consisting of several of NCA's partners and supported by NCA have worked actively with EU funding, lobbying and advocacy.

2.8 Which concrete measures have been implemented to link inputs to national plans and priorities?

All partners as well as NCA in operational projects work in close cooperation with local communities and authorities and state authorities, endeavouring to raise awareness on the various thematic areas and to have the national authorities to take over responsibility to an increasing degree. Likewise partners are engaged in lobbying or even direct cooperation with the state in order to develop laws conducive to democratisation processes and human rights (ref. 2.4 Civil Society for Accountable Governance). One partner received funds to build capacity in relation to advocacy and lobbying.

2.9 Which concrete measures have been implemented to strengthen the role of civil society in the development process?

All partners and NCA in operational projects endeavour to work according to a participatory approach, and the partners in developing capacity of own NGO. Rights-based approach is being included in the partner programmes to an increasing degree, not in the least when working for various groups of peoples' rights, be it women, children, refugees or vulnerable groups or minorities. The rights of minorities and protection issues have had a special focus in the NCA dialogue programme and in the projects for Roma communities and return and reintegration projects. Introduction to rights-based approach was presented at the partners' seminar in May 2006.

2.10 How have inputs helped to promote Norway's development policy objectives?

NCA's engagement in refugee and IDP sustainable return and support for vulnerable groups is in accordance with Norway's Western Balkans priorities. A measure to promote inter-ethnic dialogue and reconciliation processes, which NCA has contributed to particularly in Kosovo, is another priority of the Norwegian government. NCA's work against trafficking on the Balkans promotes an important policy objective of the government set out in action plan against trafficking of women and children in 2003-05 and action plan against trafficking 2005-2008. Likewise the NCA focus on Roma as the most marginalized group in Europe is in line with the set priorities of MFA. When it comes to HIV and AIDS, NCA has been instrumental in introducing and building capacity over the last 3 years. However, both the Government and NCA is now down-sizing the activities in relation to HIV and AIDS as the infection did not spread to the extent anticipated.

2.11 UN Resolution 1325 Women, Peace and Security

In 2006 NCA started a process of engaging the partners in looking into the possibilities of a dealing or settlement with the past. The plan is to include issues related to women and peace-building, as well as seeing women as a particular vulnerable part in war, not in the least in The Balkans. Here should be mentioned that NCA in its dialogue programme in Kosovo is presently trying to engage women as a special target group; for the last two years the focus has mainly been on religious leaders on various levels, these are all men.

Likewise NCA is endeavouring to widen the focus on the Roma population in cooperation with partners; with operational projects, NCA is already heavily involved in work for and among Roma. NCA is also working with and supporting projects for IDPs and refugees of various kinds, and is involved and will hopefully be able to expand and strengthen our commitment in relation to anti-trafficking. Working with these vulnerable groups, NCA will continue to raise awareness and build capacity on gender-based violence.

Finally it should be mentioned that all NCA Kosovo staff are obliged to sign an agreement which contains a Code of Conduct – including Code of Conduct on sexual exploitation (ACT).

3. FOLLOW-UP OF RESULTS AND EVALUATION

3.1 Describe the reviews/evaluations that have been carried out during the year and give a brief summary of the conclusions, recommendations and follow-up activities:

There were no evaluations carried out in 2006.